



Mr. *Hutchinson's*
S E R M O N

Delivered at NEWBURY-PORT,

April 23d, MDCCLXVII,





Valour for the Truth.

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S E R M O N,

For Substance,

Preached in the *Presbyterian Congregation*

at NEWBURY-PORT, *April 23d, 1767.*

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Published at the Desire of the Hearers.

*Curse ye Meroz, said the Angel of the LORD, Curse ye bitter
the Inhabitants thereof: Because they came not to the help of the
LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty.*

DEBORAH.

Curfed be he that doth the work of the LORD deceitfully.

JEREMIAH.

*O foolish Galatians who hath bewitched you that ye should
not obey the truth.*

PAUL.

BOSTON, NEW-ENGLAND:

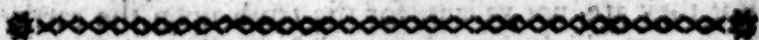
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1767.

AS the Author's highest Ambition in the following Pages, is by manifestation of the truth, to commend himself to every man's conscience, in the sight of God; so he will be sorry, if any thing has escaped him that may offend the Generation of God's Children. If they can set their seal to these truths, and find a witness in themselves, no further vindication will be needful; as the rest of the world can be no more than negative evidences, which prove nothing, *John ix. 29. We know not from whence he is.* That the spirit of truth, may guide us into all truth; and unite all our hearts to fear his name, and to strive together for the faith, and purity of the Gospel, is the prayer of one, *not ashamed of the truth.*



Valour for the Truth.



JEREMIAH IX. 3.

*But they are not valiant for the Truth upon
the Earth.*

THE royal Psalmist once vented his grief in bitter accents : they have driven me out from abiding in the inheritance of the LORD. He thought the very sparrows happy, for their nearness to God's altars. But now the tables are turned, and the house of God become a den of thieves : their iniquities full, and ruin at the door. And now the weeping Prophet, long accustomed to grief, beholding the crying abominations in *Jerusalem*, and seeing her destruction approaching ; wistheth for some lonely cottage, where he might weep in secret places, for their pride and security : not that he was afraid for himself, (for he had a promise that the enemy should entreat him well in the time of evil) but that he might not see the evils that were about to come on his people ; and especially, that his righteous soul, as of a true *Lot*, might not be vexed, from day to day, with their unlawful deeds. He in effect saith, Oh ! that I had wings like a dove, *for then* would I fly away and be at rest. Lo ! *then* would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness,

wilderness, I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest. The holy land is become a wearisome place; see the hideous catalogue of sins, in Jerusalem, *Ezek.* xxii. and in our context.

We are now to consider a negative Article in the indictment, brought in against the once faithful City. But they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth, Some may think there is a *meiosis* in the words; and that it is hinted, as if they opposed, contradicted, and blasphemed the truth. But we abide by the letter; the charge runs high, and we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth; yet the point is not strained to that degree. It doth not say, they oppugn, hate, and fight against the truth; or privily bring in damnable heresies, denying the LORD that bought them; and pervert the words of the living God: or that they rack their wits, by false glosses, and flourishes of rhetorick, to hide the truth, and corrupt men, from the simplicity that is in *Christ*: nor that they turn away from the truth, and turn to fables, as men that cannot endure sound doctrine; nor yet that they deride serious Godliness, mock the messengers of God, misuse his prophets, insisting upon their minister's letting alone the self-denying doctrines of grace; prophesying smooth things and deceits, and causing the holy one of Israel to cease from before them: neither is it said, that, when "truth was fallen in the streets," they trampled on it, in contempt and enmity to it: but they did not bestir themselves in her cause; nor to stay that glory when departing from Israel.

They seem to be of catholick tempers, great moderation and indifference in the cause of truth. *Laodicean like*, neither cold nor hot: If truth be run down, they can tamely submit. They will neither venture
their

their honour, ease, or worldly interest in her defence: If their minister teaches the way of God in truth, they are content, but if not, it gives them little or no concern. They tamely submit to let truth go for the sake of peace and ease; they must sleep in a whole skin, and avoid persecution; truth may shift for itself, they are for peace, nor will they break charity with any man, upon so small a point as that true grace of God, wherein believers stand; nor do they think the faith once delivered to the saints worth contending about. Think not strange that a mere negative should run so high; God seeth not as man seeth; see the last sentence proceeding upon negatives, *Matt. xxv. 42.* They are not then fellow-helpers to the truth; and it is all one to them, whether the cause of truth sink or swim; they are too candid to break charity upon disputable points: as *e. g.* whether *Christ be God* over all blessed forever more; or a meer man: or whether we are saved by the righteousness of *Christ*, or our own: whether we enter by *Christ* the only door, into the heavenly sheepfold, or like thieves and robbers climb up some other way; whether *Christ* died for our sins, or is dead in vain: And whether we frustrate the grace of God, or say that mercy shall be built up forever. These, with the people in the text are but indifferent things; or perhaps they invented the mean, made a garment of *Linen and Woollen*, forbidden by the law, *i. e.* halved the matter between the righteousness of *Christ* and their own; and thought if they went about to establish their own righteousness, *Christ* would satisfy for their defects. This *Paul* calls another Gospel, *Gal. i. 6.* which he says, is not another, *i. e.* no Gospel at all, and upon this footing *Christ* would profit them nothing.

This made *Paul* wax warm. "I would they were even cut off that trouble you." But it is well known

he

he was a champion for the truth, always zealous for the doctrines of Grace, and *valiant for the truth upon the earth*. And so transported, as to expose himself to persecutions in her cause, and would say as *Acts* xx. 24. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the *Lord Jesus*, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God. This dividing between *Christ* and the Law, was the policy of the judaizing teachers, *Gal.* vi. 12. to keep in with the infidel *Jews*, and avoid persecution; and which put an end to their debates, and cordially united these professors of *Christ*, with them that called *Jesus* accursed. So the false mother will have the living child divided. *Let it be neither mine nor thine; but divide it.* 1 Kings, iii. 26. *Satan* would compound so: for he knows if he has *half*, he shall have *all*; since *Christ* will endure no rival. But we proceed to consider,

First. What is truth; and what it is to be *Valiant* for it.

Secondly. The need of this *Valour*.

Thirdly. A brief illustration, more especially of one of the *Truths*, previously opened.

Fourthly. The improvement.

First. What is truth; and what to be *Valiant* for it?

If a *Pilate* should ask, as *John* xviii. 38. *What is Truth?* We should suspect him to banter; or at least not to wait for an answer. However let even a *Pilate* be told, that the faithful and true witness came to bear witness unto the *Truth*; and that every one that is of the truth, will hear his voice. If the judges of the

the land should ask *what is truth*, the reply is, Justice, or the true state of the cases before them. Then to be valiant for the truth must denote unshaken constancy, exact impartiality, uncorrupted integrity and faithfulness, in administering judgment in uprightness. These heroes in the cause of justice, will not know faces; will shake their hands from holding of bribes with disdain and indignation: will be the tools of no man's malice, will defend the poor from him that is too strong for him; suffering neither themselves nor others to frame mischief by a law. Such judges, however despised, are a greater glory and strength to any land, than the bravest generals at the head of mighty armies.

But *what is Truth* purely evangelical, which the holy Spirit is promised to guide us into? When he comes to convince of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; to open and apply the written word, and open our understandings to receive it; what do we then know by the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of *Christ*, more than others? when in God's light we see light, and receive the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; what do we find in the BIBLE any more than before? And what is that wisdom of the just; known and *justified of all her children*? We reply, the true Grace of God, or the truth as it is in *Jesus*; the spirit and life of the words of *Christ*; when the LORD opens our eyes, to behold wondrous things out of his law, as the eyes of *Hagar* were opened to see the well of water which was there before; we see no other wells of salvation but those dug by our Lord's Redeemer, and very plain in the written word: And while the unenlightened, like *Israel*, despise the pleasant land, and believe not his word, we receive his testimony, and set our seal that God is true. And one thing we know, *that whereas we were once blind now we see*; and have the witness in ourselves, for the precious truths of a

despised Gospel? And those things of the spirit of God, which the natural man receiveth not; and which are foolishness to him, neither can he know them, because spiritually discerned; even these become plain to them that understand, and right to them that find knowledge: and this real knowledge is the ground of that unfeigned faith of God's elect, which purifies their hearts, worketh by love, and makes them obey the truth through the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit first wounds, then heals; shews the strictness and extent of the divine law and Majesty of the law-giver: and hereby is the knowledge of sin as against Heaven, exceeding sinful. And not only that our actual transgressions are more than the hairs of our head; but that our nature is sin, full of enmity and inbred corruption, till we are carried back with repenting David, *Psal. li. 5.* to confess our native guilt and pollution; and we are fully convinced that the *Lord Jesus knew what was in man, Mark vii. 21, 22.* and we find ourselves with the rest of the world, under sin, and guilty before God: And after all our struggles to help and cleanse ourselves; we find our case, like that of the poor woman, that spent all she had, *even all her living*, upon physicians, and was nothing better, but rather grew worse; and must yield to the BIBLE, that all our power is gone, and that there is none shut up or left. Piteous condition! And what makes the matter seem still more deplorable, is, that we have nothing to recommend us to divine mercy, but as *Rev. iii. 17.* *Wretched, miserable, poor and blind, and naked.* Nothing now to save from utter desparation, but a rumour we have heard of the great king of Israel, as a merciful king; and that *Christ* came to save the chief of sinners.

Hark! from between the Cherubims over the mercy seat sounds out the word of God. *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion*

on whom I will have compassion. Glad tidings ! who can tell what unmerited mercy may do ? My sin has abounded, but may not mercy superabound ? Now so far convinced, we yield to divine sovereignty when it is our interest.

Let the great benefactor then, do what he will with his own ; without being controuled by silly worms. Which we could never endure before. One unsurmountable obstacle yet appears in our way. How shall mercy be displayed to God's honour ! inflexible justice, and a fiery law are full against us. It pleases God to reveal his Son in us, as the end of the law for righteousness ; peace is preached by *Jesus Christ* ; and a new and living way opened to us, into the holiest of all, by his blood. Here is Glory to God, peace and good will to men ; and a perfect harmony among the divine attributes, in our redemption through his blood. A remedy for all our maladies ; we no more wrangle about the doctrine of imputed sin, or of imputed righteousness ; we confer not with flesh and blood, but venture our eternal all upon his satisfaction : and by experiencing efficacious grace in sanctification, and a faith of the operation of God, we find that *Christ* can make willing, in the day of his power, without offering the least violence to the natural freedom of the will. Being thus, by abundant mercy, begotten again unto a lively hope ; and fasting that grace given us in *Christ Jesus* before the world began ; we are pleased with the doctrine of the election of grace, and to grace and glory ; nor would we part with one link in that golden chain of salvation. *Rom. viii. 29, 30.* And when God shews his covenant, as to them that fear him, *Psal. xxv. 14.* As David saw it, *2 Sam. xxiii. 5.* Everlasting, ordered in all things and sure ; ratified and sealed in the blood of *Christ* ; and standing on those two immutable pillars, God's word and oath. And add to these the intercession of the mediator of the

new covenant; and promise to keep all his sheep, and raise them up at the last day; upon such like grounds we are led to admit the written word; that whom Christ loveth he loveth to the end. And they are preserved in Christ Jesus, and kept by the power of God, *through faith unto salvation*: the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

And this appears to us a doctrine according to godliness; while we find that all our hopes, that the good part shall never be taken from us, make us more diligent and watchful to keep ourselves in the love of God, and to run for the prize; while we look for the mercy of the *Lord Jesus Christ* to eternal life. Thus are we led by the Holy Spirit into the light and love of the truth, as a pearl of great price; an invaluable treasure hid in the gospel field. We then *buy the truth*, but not to *sell it again*: the truth known and believed will make us free from the bondage of sin. The LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: they are witnesses for God and his truth; and he sets them to defend, attest, maintain and vindicate his truth, name and honour in the world; his true church is a pillar and a ground of truth, to hold it forth to be known and read of all men. They are not ashamed of this Gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. God hath not given them the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind; being redeemed from the earth, they have their Father's name written in their foreheads.

As Israel in Egypt by sprinkling the blood of the paschal lamb on the lintel and side posts of the house, where they were sheltered; openly declared that they trusted solely in that typical blood of sprinkling, for protection from the angel of death: so do believers openly profess Christ as their only security from deserved wrath. Hence a steady resolution to abide by
Christ

Christ and defend his truth, from whence they derive all their hopes; Ministers of this sort will use great plainness of speech in declaring the testimony of God; even though they should be counted enemies for telling the truth. When the true evangelical *Urim* and *Thummim*, answering to the words, *Manifestation and Truth*; 2 Cor. iv. 2. are with his holy ones by office; like true sons of *Levi*, they will not know their own children, or fathers house, they will know no man after the flesh, not seeking to please men to their ruin; but to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

They will openly show the absolute necessity of regeneration by the Spirit of God; and that there is no real holiness but by a vital union to Christ by faith; and that of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble-bush gather they grapes; though never so well cultivated. Of this sort were they, *Rev. xii. 11. that overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony.*

Secondly. The need of this Valour.

It is upon the earth, where the truth has in all ages met with opposition; the world has always been against Christ: the very friendship of the world is enmity with God: If the world hate you (says Christ) ye know that it hated me before it hated you. Hence the church on earth is represented as militant, *terrible as an army with banners*. Solomon's bed, *Cant. iii. 7.* denoting that truth and grace wherein Christ causeth his flock to rest at noon; has threescore valiant men about it, of the valiant of Israel, all ready to wield the sword of the spirit, in defence of the truth. Let all that know the hearts and temptations of gospel ministers, read *Ezek. 2d and 3d chapters*, and *Jer. 15th chapter*, and say if they, in special, don't need this valour; to keep them from that fear of man which bringeth a snare: and that they may be pure from the blood of all men,

as having never wittingly shunned to declare the whole counsel of God. How could an Isaiah deliver that awful message, chapter vi. till he saw his glory and spake of him? it is not likely that the dragon will see his kingdom totter, and himself fall as lightning from heaven, and not be wroth with the woman, and go to make war with the remnant of her seed that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus, *Rev. xii. 17. See Eph. vi. 10, on to verse 20.*

Thirdly. A brief illustration, more especially of one of the truths previously opened.

As the learned and pious *Dr. Owen*, and all divines of that stamp, justly look upon the doctrine of our original guilt and depravity, not only as the foundation of all the other doctrines opened above, but as fundamental to all the saving knowledge of God: We shall propose one argument among many, to prove that we all by nature are *the children of wrath* in a two-fold sense, viz. wrathful, and exposed to wrath; or guilty before God with the rest of the world, and depraved in all our powers. Argument. Infants are sinners, guilty and polluted; or they cannot be saved in any way pointed out in our BIBLE. *John xiv. 6. Jesus saith unto him, I am the way and the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me. Acts iv. 12. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Rom. v. 19. By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.* Here is all the way so much as hinted in the BIBLE, the only door of hope, but Christ did not bleed for innocents; he did not come by water and blood to make atonement for innocent beings, and to wash them that were clean already. "Christ is not dead in vain, he came to seek and to save that which was lost," and display his great mercy in delivering poor souls from the lowest hell. But then it must be only such as he saw in danger.

He

He comes to deliver prisoners out of prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house, *i. e.* from spiritual slavery to sin and satan. But did he shed the blood of the covenant that thereby he might send forth those that were never there, out of that pit wherein is no living water? it is contrary one would think to common sense, to suppose that Christ came to raise up such as were not fallen; and if the disobedience of the first *Adam* is not imputed to infants, the righteousness of the second *Adam* need not be imputed; and they can never join the songs of the church triumphant. "Thou hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood," &c. All the utensils Christ brought with him, were Water and Blood, adapted to our sin and misery, exhibited in the two comprehensive benefits, justification, and sanctification; represented in the two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. But what has such a Physician to do with them that are whole, and have no need? And why, consistent with common sense, were infants circumcised among the *Jews*, to cut off the body of the sins of the flesh, if they had no sin? If he cannot be clean that is born of a woman, and that which is born of the flesh is flesh, *i. e.* corrupt, then circumcision is rational, and the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness was necessary for them. And why do we wash them in the laver of baptism? durst we deny original sin, and yet say to Christ, if thou wash them not they can have no part with thee? But if we allow that our first Father, after he had sinned, begat a Son in his own likeness, as opposed to that moral image of God, in which he had been created; and that God hath made of this one, now tainted blood, all nations of men, then infants may reasonably be baptized to wash away their sins in the fountain of the blood and Spirit of *Jesus Christ*. How consistently can we deny original guilt and depravity, and yet pray for infants at their baptism, or any other time? It must be to this effect.

I ask not; O LORD, for abundant mercy, in begetting my child again to a lively hope, or that baptism may save it, through the influences of the Holy Spirit; for it need not be born again; and is in no danger of perishing. I do not implore thy great mercy in delivering my child's soul, from the lowest hell; for justice itself must screen and secure it? I ask not washing for it, in the gospel laver, for it has no sin, nor uncleanness. I do not ask that it may be baptized with the Holy Ghost as with fire, for it needs no refining: nor that *Christ* would come to seek and save it, for it is not lost: nor that it may be justified by the blood of *Jesus*, for it is under no condemnation. The child at present has no occasion for the unmerited mercy of the Father, the grace and righteousness of the Son, nor of the sanctifying influences of the Holy Ghost, or to be (like *John the Baptist*) filled therewith from his mother's womb. The child has no spot nor blemish any more than a clean piece of Paper, and so needed not that *Christ* should give himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with his own blood. And it is my opinion with some of our wise and learned writers, to frustrate the grace of God, and that *Christ* is dead in vain, in respect to infants. I pray that Justice may take place; and the child may be saved by the old covenant; as it cannot consistently enter by the door into the heavenly sheepfold, may it be helped to climb up some other way. In the mean time I earnestly pray that he that made it, would be so just as to keep it from bodily pain, at least till it is old enough to commit some Sin to deserve it; and that it may not be wronged nor punished while innocent.

For in truth my conscience is not a little muzzled, when I consider how death and the miseries of this life have reigned from *Adam* to *Moses*, and in all ages over them that had not sinned actually after the similitude of *Adam's* transgression. But when I observe the infants of the old world, *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*; of *Jerusalem*,

salem, &c. involved with their parents, in the overwhelming vengeance, of an incensed, but righteous Governor; I am ready to say, in some serious hours; who ever perished being innocent? Will God slay a righteous nation? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" And to say a just God punishes innocent beings, as fatherly chastisements, seems to me sometimes to make the matter more dark and incomprehensible. And I can no more see through it, than the peculiar notion of some writers, that Christ shed not his blood to make atonement for our souls: but that a holy and just God delivered up his Son to death; neither for any sin of his own, or ours, but, in all respects innocent, to manifest his justice, holiness and hatred of sin; that men might fear to commit it. But it has sometimes occurred to my mind, that this notion tends rather to make us fear innocency, and by no means is compatible with the wisdom, justice and holiness of God. So that I stagger sometimes in my opinion; or in denying, with Dr. *Taylor*, the divinity and satisfaction of Christ, and am almost persuaded to believe that God hath laid on Christ the iniquities of us all; and that his own self, bare our sins, in his own body on the tree. If infants might be free from all bodily pain and death, till they arrive to moral agency, and actual sin; and they might be kept from shewing such early inclinations to evil; our notion of original sin would not appear so uncertain and embarrassed. Honestly spoken. I would that all that stumble at the word of Grace, were thus open and self consistent.

But if *the Fall* brought mankind into a state of Sin and Misery, the Gospel Salvation is as open to infants as to others. Both free and efficacious Grace may reign through the Righteousness of Christ, to their eternal life.

It belongs to those that deny original Sin, to find some other ladder, besides that of *Jacob's* which is *Christ*, *John* i. 52. upon which Angels can descend to fetch those infant *Lazaruses* into *Abraham's* bosom. It may serve to corroborate this scheme of divine truth, that it agreeth with the experience of all penitent believers, from *Abel* to this day. Wisdom is, and ever has been justified of her children. And Angels, that are Ministers to them that shall be heirs of Salvation, are entirely in it. How ready were the Cherubims to guard by a flaming sword, the pass to the old tree of life; lest a silly race by a vain presumption should think to live by the first covenant. But when the Tabernacle was formed according to the divine pattern shewed to *Moses* in the mount; and afterwards, the Temple, the pattern of which was given by the Spirit to *David*; both shadows of good things to come; in them the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat, and looking with complacency upon it, shewed how they desired to look into this way of Salvation, by faith in his blood, and learn by the Church the manifold wisdom of God. There is joy in the presence of the Angels of God over one Sinner that repenteth; and they are much more elevated, in sublime praises, to see such Glory to God, in this peace and good will to men; than for all the wonders of the old creation; *when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.* And the scriptures are so plain and full to all these doctrines of divine Grace; that as the learned Dr. *South*, in his smart manner, speaks of our Redemption by purchase, the Scriptures must be crucified as well as *Christ*, to put any other tolerable sense upon the expressions. And all the opposition to these great points, in all Ages, proceeds upon the plan of that master of *Israel*, *John* iii. 9. *How can these things be?* Proud reason, unsanctified, ever did, and will stumble at the word. But shall the disciples of our Lord's day, "who beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth;" shall they disown their

their Saviour, because the wise and learned knew not from whence he was? Shall we conclude it cannot be day because some of the feathered tribe cannot see to fly?

Moreover, for you it is safe: for while you go on in every duty, in the strength of divine grace; and make mention of the righteousness of *Christ*, even of his only, as your plea for acceptance, you are in no danger, for this only mistake (as some may call it) *viz.* saying "in the Lord have I righteousness and strength." But on the other hand, if you are right in this scheme of truth, then, according to your principles, those that deny these doctrines do in vain weary themselves to find the only door of hope: and if they, like the infidel *Jews*, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, never submit to the righteousness of God: How awful the thought! What if by climbing up some other way, they rack all their wits to rob God of his glory, he designed in our redemption, by *Christ*!

What if satan should present himself, with the sons of God in our solemn assemblies; and there hear ministers in earnest endeavouring to pull down his strong holds, by mere moral swasion, instead of the testimony of God; insisting upon holiness of heart and life, without union to Christ, and to resist and vanquish the Devil, without the grace and righteousness of him, that came to destroy his works; perhaps they might mention sometimes the name of *Jesus*, as a meer sound; and vouch in *St. Paul*, as full to their purpose; what would that cunning spirit think of such preaching? that strong man armed has never yet trembled before any but the *Lion* of the tribe of *Judah*, who is stronger than he. In this respect he will be pleased to find the doctrines he hates so despised, and his power so well maintained; but such is his pride and self-sufficiency; will he not condemn the feeble attempt? and say, *Jesus* I know, and *Paul* I know, but who are ye?

Improvement.

First, This doctrine gives no good character of some that profess to know God and the truth, or even some that preach in his name. As particularly the fearful and unbelieving, that will venture nothing in the cause of *Christ*. All cry out upon dastardly generals or soldiers, as traitors to our civil interests; but is not a Gospel ratified in the blood of our incarnate Deity, at least as dear? What shall we now think of them that oppose, contradict and blaspheme the truth, and abuse their learning to bring into contempt the marvellous plan of redeeming grace? And what shall we now think of those, that in their profession or preaching, hide their principles, hover in the dark, and the trumpet gives an uncertain sound? we might call those *Neuters* if we were not assured that there were none such in the cause of truth. "He, says *Christ*, that "is not with me, is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." These are easily detected by only observing what company they keep, and who are their chosen friends, if they profess the truth; but go in company with enemies to it. If with them, every one that doth evil against the truth is good in the sight of the LORD, or they think the LORD delighteth in him; it is plain, *Christ* will spue them out of his mouth, for a double heart as well as a double tongue, the Lord abhors, *Gal. ii. 18. For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a Transgressor.*

Secondly, The more tolerable sort of enemies to the truth, are those that are open and so far honest in their principles. They are (if we may so say) honestly deceived. *Paul* in his unregenerate state, was such an one, he verily thought with himself that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of *Jesus of Nazareth*. But we need no greater proofs than *Rom. ix. 3.* (in the original) *For I did wish myself, accursed, from Christ,*

Christ, for my brethren my kinsmen according to the flesh.
q. d. I was so far from changing my religion out of a pique against the *Jews*; that it was the habitual temper of my mind, to take my lot with them, and have no part in *Christ*; which is virtually to be accursed from him. And though we will not, as some, impudently say, *Paul* was a good man before he went to *Damascus*; yet we allow him to have a manly soul, and to be in a sort, honestly a blasphemer, a persecuter, and injurious, really thinking he did *GOD* service by killing his people. To these, great gentleness, and tenderness are due from the children of the truth. *Tit. iii, 3.* *For we ourselves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, &c.*

Thirdly, Such spiritual blindness is no new thing under the Sun. *Cain* was as blind in bringing an offering without blood, to make atonement for the Soul. And *Israel* never found out the plan, *GOD* was going upon, in bringing them to *Canaan*, not for their righteousness, nor by their own sword and bow: but he designed to help his servant *Israel* in remembrance of his own mercy, *Psal. cvi. 7.* *Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt, &c.* see *Deut. xxix. 2, 3, 4.* hence the false report of the land. *Numbers 13th* chapter. How common in *Israel*, that even his watchmen were blind and ignorant men? the seers hath he covered, how many now have no higher notion of the Lamb of *GOD*, than that he became a Saviour, that we might be our own Saviours?

Fourthly, The children of truth should unite in it's defence, be true to *Christ*, and faithful with his saints. If any truth be attacked, run to the help of the *LORD*, unite their lamentations, "that truth is so fallen in our streets:" and as these doctrines are neglected, irreligion and all manner of impieties prevail among us. And may not all that wish well to the churches, lift up their voice and weep, when they see so many run before

before they are sent, and privily creep not only into the church, but into the ministry unawares, not solemnly examined, and never sent by God or man? We highly disapprove this conduct in *lay-preachers*, and then go and imitate them; and is it not become in a manner, common in some parts of the country, to set men apart in a solemn manner, as the servants of the most high God, to shew unto men the way of Salvation without the least inquiry into their knowledge of the truth? They say perhaps they believe the BIBLE. So do *Papists, Quakers, &c.* as far as they like it. But may not such as lay on hands inquire into their ability to read the BIBLE; and whether they can find the divinity and satisfaction of *Christ* there, or not; or will they object against the word, *satisfaction*, because not in the BIBLE? methinks there is some difference betwixt reading that holy book, to confute it, and reading to believe and practice. When the great Shepherd shall appear, we shall know whether this conduct agrees with the charge he has left to lay hands suddenly on no man, and not to be partakers of other men's sins, but to keep themselves pure.

Fifthly, Truth is in no danger. Great is the truth and will prevail; greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. Men may turn traitors, cowards and what not; he that came to bear witness unto the truth will maintain it, and they that are with him are called, and chosen and faithful: all that fall on this stone of *Israel* shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall it will grind him to powder.

Now I beseech you Brethren, to suffer a word of exhortation, and we have done. You have a good God, a good cause, and a good BIBLE, and blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear. The time is come, foretold by the Apostle, when men will not endure sound doctrine. But will you also go away? has not *Christ* the

the words of eternal life? Have you not heard him yourselves, and do you not know that this is indeed the *Christ* the Saviour of the world? And that the Son of God is come and hath given you an understanding, that you may know him that is true? 1 *John* v. 20. never upon any consideration, whatsoever, give up this heavenly charter. But abide by the truth; and let your hearts be settled in this, that the God that answereth by fire, is certainly God; and that this is his truth, that is sealed up by the Holy Spirit, in the hearts of his disciples.

Be watchful then, and strengthen the things that remain that are ready to die. Remember how you have received, and heard, and hold fast, and repent. We conclude with 1 *Pet.* v. 10, 11. *But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

F I N I S.

